

FAQs

1. How was the sequence of county projects determined and can I change my county's position in the schedule?

Answer: The sequence of county projects is determined by FEMA based on an examination of several criteria including population, population density, and various risk factors such as the number of flood insurance policies in effect and repetitive loss claims. The schedule is designed to smooth out the flow of money, balance urban and rural areas, and leverage ongoing research that might impact mapping in a particular county. Minor alterations to the sequencing schedule are possible, but must be approved by FEMA. The current schedule of counties is available at www.illinoisfloodmaps.org.

2. How long will it take to complete the project in my county?

Answer: The length of time to complete a county study varies depending on factors like the number of stream miles in the county, the complexity of flood zones, and the amount of new approved study information to be added. A reasonable estimate is 24 months from initial contact with county and community officials to adoption of the maps and flood insurance study (FIS) by ordinance.

3. Will errors in the existing effective Flood Insurance Rate Maps be corrected on the updated digital maps?

Answer: Incorrect, missing, or outdated information with respect to roads, railroads, municipal boundaries, and annotation will be addressed in the updated maps. Corrections can be submitted to the map modernization project team at the countywide scoping meeting. Improvements to flood zone boundaries will occur as a result of registering the boundaries to an orthophoto base. In cases where better topographic information is available from the county or communities, more precise redelineation of floodplain boundaries can occur. Corrections or alterations to the floodplain boundaries based on new hydrologic or hydraulic study information can occur only if the new or revised study information has been reviewed and approved by FEMA in advance of the mapping project.

4. Will new or revised hydrologic information be incorporated in the updated digital maps?

Answer: Yes, but only when it has been reviewed and approved by FEMA in advance of the mapping project. Counties and communities are encouraged to submit this information for review as soon as possible. Approved study information can be submitted for the project at the scoping meeting.

5. Will the map modernization project be requesting information from counties and communities to do the project and, if so, what information?

Answer: Any available local base map information that could improve the quality of the revised flood insurance maps will be requested at the initial project team meeting and then again at the scoping meeting. Examples of wanted data include road annotation, stream and lake annotation, recent municipal boundaries, newer or better resolution orthophotography, and high quality topographic information at a 2 or 5-foot contour interval. Counties and communities may also share new or revised hydrologic and hydraulic information and identify any future mapping needs.

6. In what form (paper or digital) will the maps for my community or county be delivered?

Answer: At the preliminary phase, when maps are distributed for review and comment, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources will provide hardcopy printed map panels to each local government jurisdiction with flood hazard data. These same map panels will be available digitally on a State Water Survey website in adobe format for viewing and downloading. Final effective maps will be distributed by FEMA to local map repositories in hardcopy form. The Department of Natural Resources plans to maintain map panels in digital format.

7. How will Letters of Map Change (LOMCs) be addressed in the updated maps?

Answer: Communities and the county should check the accuracy of the list of Letters of Map Change (LOMAs, LOMRs or LOMR-Fs) distributed at the scoping meeting. An accurate, complete list will permit the Map Modernization Program to correctly categorize LOMCs for incorporation, revalidation, or additional review.

8. Will my community or county have a chance to comment on the maps?

Answer: Local government officials and private citizens will be able to view and comment on the maps about 15 months into a county's project when preliminary maps and the preliminary Flood Insurance Study are released. If there are no Base Flood Elevation changes in the county the comment period will last 30-days. Base Flood Elevation changes can be appealed or challenged on a scientific or engineering basis during a 90-day period.

9. Can I use the floodplain boundary information in my Geographic Information System (GIS) in conjunction with other data layers, for example, plat information?

Answer: FEMA is planning to make a vector layer of flood hazard data available once the maps are final or effective. This layer will be suitable for use in a GIS with other data layers maintained by the local entity.

10. Is the digital flood boundary layer considered the "official" boundary or is the hardcopy map panel the official document?

Answer: FEMA is reviewing how the vector data layer can be made available as the official flood boundary. The Agency's existing policy is to treat the hardcopy map panels as the official or effective document for purposes of National Flood Insurance Program enforcement.

11. How long does our community have to adopt the new maps?

Answer: The new maps must be adopted by ordinance six months after FEMA sends the Letter of Final Determination. If a county or community fails to adopt the maps and FIS by ordinance within 6 months, they will be suspended from the National Flood Insurance Program.

12. The new maps are countywide, but my community is located in more than one county. How will it be mapped?

Answer: If a community is located in more than one county, it will be mapped to the county border. For example, the portion of the City of Sandwich that is located in Kendall County will appear on the Kendall County map series, and the portion in DeKalb County will appear on the DeKalb County map series. The mapping may occur simultaneously in adjacent counties or not depending on the sequencing of counties for map production.

13. If my community is located in two counties and the second county is not scheduled for map updates in the current year, how is the adoption of map panels by ordinance handled for my community?

Answer: Since counties move through the map modernization process on different schedules (see county sequencing map at www.illinoisfloodmaps.org), a community in two counties may need to update its ordinance twice depending on the map production schedule for each county. When a county's study is complete, the community will adopt by ordinance the map panels up to the county border. The map panels for the other portion of the community (in the second county) will be adopted by ordinance when that county's maps are updated and completed.